

Developing biological objectives for perennial wadeable streams in the State of California

Review of Workplan
Scientific Advisory Group
21 October 2010

Overall Comments

Science team is to be commended for this effort to advance biocriteria development.

Approach

1. Reference condition
2. Stressor-response models
3. Water body classification
4. Stressor identification
5. Information management

General comments on approach

Explicit recognition of policy context for science team decisions in approach; suggest more interaction between science team and policy and stakeholder groups (e.g., to clarify objectives and to anticipate implementation issues).

Clarify language/definition of terms to facilitate communication within team and between groups.

Identify specific goals for establishing biological criteria and how this approach will attain those goals (e.g., describe how criteria will protect high quality streams and set reasonable expectations for degraded systems).

Comments on Task 1 (Reference conditions)

- Continue to refine reference network to capture natural gradients within and among regions.
- Clarify screening process for reference sites and work towards greater objectivity.
- Define “reference” condition and use consistently

Comments on Task 2 (Stressor-response models)

- Change the name of this task to represent goal (e.g. best attainable conditions given human landscape).
- Check with regulatory group about variable criteria for single designated uses.
- A priori selection variables for non-controllable human effect axis with input from stakeholders and regulators.
- Identify pros and cons of binning v. continuous model
- Many questions about using this approach, use a case study to demonstrate its feasibility
- Consider using this approach to inform traditional criteria setting (i.e., percentiles of reference)
- Choose biological variables that are important for programmatic goals rather than on statistical criteria.

Comments on Task 3 (Water body classification)

- Regionalization scheme
- Many questions that will probably be answered as part of Task 2
- Pros and cons binning

Questions for the review team

- Sound technical approach?
- Appropriate technical activities to achieve goals?
- Additional tasks?